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# 3D Action

## *Professional Services Committee*

### **Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Study of Special Education Certification**

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**Executive Summary:** This item presents the mandated report to the Governor and the Legislature on Special Education Certification as required by the Commission and SB 1209 (Chap. 517, Stats. 2006).

**Recommended Action:** That the enclosed report be approved and forwarded to the Governor and Legislature.

**Presenters:** Jan Jones Wadsworth, Consultant and Michael McKibbin, Administrator, Professional Services Division

#### **Strategic Plan Goal: 1**

**Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators.**

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs.

December 2007



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# **Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Study of Special Education Certification**

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## **Introduction**

This agenda item presents the mandated report to the Governor and the Legislature on Special Education Certification as required by the Commission and SB 1209 (Chap. 517, Stats. 2006). It contains 17 recommended modifications of the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credential.

## **Background**

In June 2006, the Commission directed staff to begin the review and revision of the structure and requirements for the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credential. Later that summer, the State Budget Act included funds to carry out the review and the passage of SB 1209 provided further direction and required that a report be provided regarding the work.

To that end, a Special Education Credential Workgroup was formed in December 2006 and began its deliberations in February 2007. The report contained in this agenda item represents the collaborative effort of the Special Education Credential Workgroup including its recommendations for modifications to the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credentials.

## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the following report on Special Education Certification for transmittal to the Governor and the Legislature pursuant to SB 1209 (Chap. 517, Stats. 2006).

## **Next Steps**

An implementation plan for the recommendations of the Special Education Credential Workgroup will be presented to the Commission at the January-February 2008 meeting.



COMMISSION ON  
TEACHER CREDENTIALING

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*Ensuring Educator Excellence*

*A Report to the Governor and Legislature  
on Special Education Certification*

December 2007



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# **Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Study of Special Education Certification**

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## **Executive Summary**

As directed by the Commission and required by SB 1209 (Chap. 517, Stats. 2006), a workgroup of stakeholders was formed to study the structure and requirements for the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credentials and make proposed recommendations for consideration by the Commission.

In June 2006, the Commission directed staff to begin the review and revision of the structure and requirements for the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credentials. Later that summer the State Budget Act included funds to carry out the review and the passage of SB 1209 provided further direction and required that a report be provided regarding the work. Several actions were taken immediately to begin this important work.

The first action taken was to require that all Education Specialist Programs amend their approved programs to include instruction in the areas of literacy and strategies to teach English learners. By January of 2007, all programs had submitted the necessary amendments. The second activity was to convene fourteen meetings around the state to explore the concerns of stakeholders about the structure of special education credentials with a particular focus on subject matter requirements for the credential, the clear credential requirements, and redundancy issues. The third activity was to convene a workgroup to explore special education credentials and to make recommendations to the Commission for changes in both the structure and processes. The Special Education Credential Workgroup was formed in December 2006 and began its deliberations in February 2007. The group was provided with summary information from the stakeholder meetings, information gathered about federal requirements, activities in other states, and extensive data on special education in California such as supply and demand for educators.

The deliberations of the workgroup have been guided by a set of goals and a set of questions. The goals were to modify the current special education credential structure to accomplish the following:

- Provide improved services to California's students with disabilities;
- Provide more opportunities to become a special education teacher while reducing redundancies in preparation and streamlining the credential structure;
- Improve the skill levels and retention rates among special education teachers;
- Assist local education agencies in meeting their need for qualified special education personnel.

In response to these goals and continually throughout their deliberations, the Workgroup considered its recommendations in the context of four major questions. A fifth question was added as the Workgroup attempted to reconcile subject matter requirements for Education Specialist Credential holders and federal requirements. The questions are as follows:

- What have these recommendations done to improve service delivery for children with special needs?
- Have these recommendations improved access to and retention of effective special education personnel?
- How do these recommendations streamline the current processes?
- What redundancies have been addressed and alleviated?
- How do these recommendations align California requirements with federal requirements?

Below is the list of the 17 recommendations from the Commission's Workgroup about credential structure and subject matter competence. Each references which of the five goals that were addressed by the recommendation.

Type	#	Special Education Recommendation	A	B	C	D	E
Structure	1	Maintain Current Credentials, Expand Authorizations	x		x		
	2	Multiple Entry Points including Special Populations Major		x	x		
	3	Improve Advisement, Recruitment and Articulation		x		x	
	4	Include an Education Specialist Teaching Performance Assessment	x		x		
	5	Revise Clear Credential Structure to Include Induction			x	x	
	6	Add Commission Certificates of Authorization	x	x	x	x	
	7	Additional Options in Speech Language Pathology Credentials	x	x	x	x	x
	8	Provide Career Ladder Opportunities, Equivalencies		x		x	
	9	Expand Program Delivery Options		x	x	x	x
Subject Matter Competence	10	Elementary Subject Matter Options					x
	11	Secondary Subject Matter Options					x
	12	List Authorization on Credential				x	x
	13	Out of State Parity					x
	14	Subject Matter Authorized by Previous Credential		x			x
	15	32 Unit Major for Secondary		x			x
	16	Encourage Use of Service Delivery Options	x	x	x		x
	17	Continue Dialogue To Find Flexibility				x	x

A: Improve Services to Students with Disabilities

B: Provide More Opportunities to Become a Special Educator

C: Improve Skill Levels and Retention Rates of Teachers

D: Reduce Redundancies, Streamline Process, Improved Service to Districts

E: Align State and Federal Policies, Align CTC and CDE Policies

## **Recommended Modifications of the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credential**

Below is a summary of and brief rationale for each of the recommendations of the Workgroup as they pertain to: credential structure and subject matter competence;. *(Please note: the number listed in the parenthesis is the corresponding number of the recommendation in the summary chart on page 2 of this item.)*

### **Recommendations Related to Structure**

1. The current Education Specialist Certification and Other Related Services should be maintained, but the authorization would be expanded to allow the credential to be more flexibly used. Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) instruction should be provided in all credential areas and the credential authorization should reflect this preparation.

Rationale: This recommendation would increase the preparation of Education Specialists in the areas of ASD and provide expanded and approved services to ASD students.

2. There should be multiple entry points into special education teacher preparation programs.
  - Entry points should be available for those who know they want to be special education teachers when they enter college.
  - Undergraduate options should be encouraged including an undergraduate “Special Populations” major that would integrate core academic subject matter instruction, coursework about special populations and special education pedagogy and field experiences.
  - Options for those who want to teach secondary special education which combine a major in a core academic subject and special education should be available, streamlined and encouraged.
  - Options for those who want to seek two credentials; e.g., Multiple Subject and Mild/Moderate or Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe should be available and encouraged.
  - Both student teaching based teacher preparation and internships should be available for those who decide they want to teach after achieving their baccalaureate degree or after another career.

Rationale: Potential special education teachers make career decisions at different times in their lives. The credential structure should provide opportunities that allow them to effectively and efficiently pursue their goals. Each of the routes would be subject to the same standards and requirements although the use of assessments and granting equivalencies to meet these requirements is encouraged and expected.

3. All preparation programs should include careful and continuous advisement, expanded recruitment, carefully sequenced instruction and field experiences, and support systems.

Rationale: Programs should include assistance throughout the program and from the site level support providers during field experiences and induction. Early advice leads to more efficient pathways to certification, and early field experiences help guide prospective teachers in determining the right pathway.



4. To earn a preliminary credential, each candidate shall demonstrate the ability to perform each Teaching Performance Expectation for Education Specialist teachers through a Teaching Performance Assessment.

Rationale: A Teaching Performance Assessment will provide a common measure that can be used by Education Specialist programs to ensure that candidates can perform the Teaching Performance Expectations required in the program.

5. To clear an Education Specialist Credential, a program that combines advanced coursework and supported induction should be available to all preliminary credential holders. If an individual holds more than one credential, the Individualized Induction Plan (IIP) that guides the teacher's advanced preparation should be written to clear all preliminary credentials held.

Rationale: There is a considerable body of evidence that supported teachers remain in teaching significantly longer than those who are not supported. An Education Specialist must provide instruction to students with special needs in a wide variety of service delivery options. In the beginning years of teaching applied and advanced preparation will greatly assist the novice teacher become increasingly more effective in serving the needs of students with disabilities. The use of the IIP can lead to focused, effective instruction that will allow applied experiences for all the teaching credentials that the teacher holds.

6. Commission Certificates of Authorization should be available to allow Education Specialist Credential holders to expand the authorization without obtaining a new credential. These certificates should be available in the areas of Physically and Health Impaired, and Deaf-Blind. Certificates in Resource Specialist and Early Childhood Special Education would continue.

Rationale: Credential certificates provide specific advanced preparation. Certificate programs will lead to expanded expertise for teachers, improved services to special needs students, through a streamlined, non-redundant process.

7. Speech-Language Pathology credential programs should be expanded to allow a continuum of opportunities. Because the current structure includes a range of employment possibilities including work in hospitals and clinics as well as schools, the structure of the instructional program could be streamlined to focus on those skills and knowledge necessary to work in schools. This credential would be a seventh Education Specialist Credential and would focus on the full range of communication and language development skills taught and remediated in schools. Other streamlining activities that would help reduce the shortage include:
  - Build a career ladder for speech aides (SLPAs) and facilitate their entry into upper division coursework to become speech-language pathologists.
  - Provide paid intern opportunities in public schools for persons to complete their clinical and school experiences following achievement of a baccalaureate degree.
  - Encourage more programs to offer classes convenient to already certified teachers who want to be speech-language pathologists.
  - Explore ways to grow programs and to attract more diverse students.
  - Develop ways to partner with districts to meet local needs.

Rationale: This proposed credential would focus specifically on the preparation needed to teach in schools. It would provide expanded opportunities for candidates who want to serve students with communication needs such as students with ASD and dyslexia and work closely with other teachers in the continuum of providing communication and literacy skills.

8. Opportunities for special education teachers should be available at all stages of adult learning. There should be career ladder program for paraprofessionals and speech aides. There should be opportunities for parents of students with special needs and second career professionals to enter teaching at a point later in their lives. Teacher preparation programs should be more predisposed to grant equivalent credit for prior experiences where demonstration of skill and performance can be shown.

Rationale: Opportunities should be available to all who can meet the qualifications set by programs. Programs should be predisposed to offer equivalent credit and be prepared to streamline their programs and grant equivalent credit to those who are able to demonstrate required knowledge and performance.

9. Special Education programs are encouraged to expand services to candidates in the following ways:
  - Utilize distance learning mechanisms to deliver instruction. This is particularly important in low incidence programs to assure access to specialized preparation in all regions of the state.
  - Programs, particularly low incidence programs, should share candidates to allow instruction in foundational knowledge, core curriculum and early field experiences to be provided in locations convenient to their home or through distance learning. Programs should encourage transfer of credit and multi-campus programs so expertise in content areas can be shared.
  - Programs should pay particular attention to recruiting diverse candidates into Education Specialist programs including actively recruiting candidates with disabilities, those from ethnic and racial groups underrepresented in the teaching workforce, and encourage males to become special education teachers as they represent only about fourteen percent of special education teachers nationwide.

Rationale: The expansion of technology allows preparation programs such as those in the low incidence credential areas to reach audiences that previously would have been unavailable. Due to the small number of faculty and candidates in low incidence programs, statewide flexible entry and equivalency of coursework among institutions of higher education would facilitate growth of these programs. If the shortages in special education teachers are to be overcome, traditional recruitment strategies must be enhanced by seeking potential teachers and providing better access to programs.

### **Recommendations for Subject Matter Competence**

1. (10) In schools designated as elementary schools, as well as junior high and middle schools which designate their classrooms as teaching elementary curriculum, the appropriate subject matter competence determiner shall be the CSET: Multiple Subject exam.

Rationale: In 2003 the State Board of Education and the Commission agreed that all elementary teacher candidates are required to meet subject matter competence by passing the state required exam.

2. (11) Special education teachers who are assigned as teachers of record in a secondary classroom, including those junior high and middle schools that identify themselves as middle/high schools, must possess subject matter competence in a NCLB core academic subject area. More specifically, middle/high subject matter competence verification through coursework or examination would be limited to English, mathematics, and science.

Rationale: For secondary special education teachers, including those junior high and middle schools that identify themselves as secondary schools, IDEA/NCLB only recognizes these three subject areas for use in the HOUSSE option for “new” middle/high special education teachers. By focusing on these three subject areas, the ‘new’ middle/high special education teacher will have greater flexibility to meet IDEA/NCLB subject matter competency in other core academic subjects taught within two years of date-of-hire by using the HOUSSE option. Special education teachers who have demonstrated subject matter at the elementary level could be assigned as a co-teacher at the secondary level; new secondary special education teachers could utilize a HOUSSE process to move to the elementary level. This flexibility helps employers with assignment issues, and allows special education professionals to move across different settings during their careers, enhancing retention by alleviating teacher burn-out.

3. (12) List on the Education Specialist Credential document the following:
  - a. Method of meeting subject matter competence.
  - b. Authorized services specific to the special education area and subject matter competence; for example, passage of CSET: Multiple Subject, would authorize all settings (home/hospital, self-contained class, etc.) in K-8 and high school consultation and collaboration.

Rationale: This would allow employers (and credential holders) to know which Education Specialist Credential holders are qualified to teach specific core content areas and should facilitate more appropriate assignments of special education teachers. This will also provide information to the credential holder about the subject matter authorization of the credential. Listing clear statements on the credential document about the subject matter routes completed by candidates assists preparation programs and employing districts to understand and communicate more effectively about appropriate job placements for graduates and assists preparation programs to communicate more clearly with potential students about the relationship of their subject matter preparation and their realistic job opportunities upon graduation. For example, a teacher candidate may demonstrate subject matter at the elementary level to earn a special education credential but finds employment at the secondary level. The individual is authorized to serve in the special education assignment, but does not meet the IDEA/NCLB subject matter competence requirement.

4. (13) Holders of special education credentials prepared in California may earn an introductory subject matter authorization in the same manner as general education teachers. This subject matter authorization must be a minimum of 32 semester units or a degree

major issued only in NCLB core academic subject areas thus making the teacher subject matter competent.

Rationale: Special Education teachers prepared in California should meet the same requirements as teachers prepared in other states and issued credentials in California. SB 1209 allows teachers prepared in other states and seeking credentials in California to meet subject matter with a 32 unit degree major.

5. (14) Holders of General, Standard and Ryan Teaching Credentials do not need to meet an additional subject matter competence requirement for the special education credential. Holding one of these teaching credentials meets that requirement regardless of the subject area of that credential. In addition, the Early Childhood Special Education Credential continues to be exempt from subject matter requirements.

Rationale: Per Title 5 requirements, holders of these credentials have met subject matter competence requirements.

6. (15) In addition to the Commission-approved subject matter program, passage of the appropriate examination, or completion of a degree major or major equivalent (a minimum of 32 semester units) meets the subject matter competence requirement for the special education credential.

Rationale: This would provide parity for all who seek an Education Specialist Credential. Increasing the options for meeting subject matter will allow more options for early deciders and late deciders, including career changers. For example, an engineer who decides to change careers could demonstrate subject matter at the secondary level in mathematics with 32 units of coursework completed while earning his/her engineering degrees.

7. (16) Those secondary classrooms for which districts are unable to find special education teachers appropriately qualified in subject matter areas should use service delivery models such as co-teaching, collaboration and other consultative models that team general education and special education teachers and provide a subject matter competent teacher of record.

Rationale: Among service delivery options are collaborative teaching models. These are options which would allow for classrooms to be in compliance with NCLB/IDEA without the Educational Specialist Credential holder possessing the required subject matter competence. These options improve the quality of service delivery for all children. For example, the recommendation would enable co-teaching of secondary, general, and special education teachers, combining their expertise in subject matter and teaching strategies for all students' success.

8. (17) Due to the number of complex challenges in implementation of the state and federal Subject Matter Competence/Verification requirements at all levels, the Commission should continue to collaborate with the State Board of Education and the Department of Education as flexible pathways are identified for demonstration of subject matter competence. Flexible pathways might include the following:

- Give elementary teachers an extended “grace” period to achieve subject matter competence in a core academic secondary area;
- Allow an extended “grace” period to achieve subject matter competence in a core academic secondary subject area for those teaching in a setting deemed K-8 for junior and middle school candidates;
- Add the HOUSSE option for new special education teachers assigned at the elementary level and who have demonstrated only secondary subject matter competence;
- Provide advising to candidates early enough so that informed decisions are made by candidates regarding the level of students they want to teach;
- Provide the same options to California students that are currently available to out-of-state applicants, subject matter majors with 32 units for secondary or approved program. For example, the same streamlining processes that SB 1209 gives to out-of-state candidates should be applied to California prepared candidates; and encourage the State Board of Education and Department of Education to add the HOUSSE option for new special education teachers assigned at the elementary level who have demonstrated only secondary subject matter competence.

Rationale: HOUSSE options for new credential holders would provide more flexibility for candidates and employers in assigning special education credential holders across elementary and secondary settings.

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# **Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Study of Special Education Certification**

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## **Section I Introduction**

### **Background**

In June 2006, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) directed staff to begin a review of the current credential structure and requirements of the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credentials. This review was implemented for two major reasons:

- Senate Bill 1209 amends Education Code Section 44265.1, and states that, “by December 1, 2007, the commission shall report to the Legislature and the Governor on the current existing process and requirements for obtaining a specialist credential in special education and recommend modifications to enhance and expedite these procedures.”
- Every 7-10 years each credential area is reviewed by Commission staff and stakeholders to determine the effectiveness of the existing credential requirements and structure and to ensure the standards reflect changes and developments in the field.

Initially, the staff held 14 field meetings throughout the state to listen to stakeholder issues. The meetings, each two day sessions, focused on issues related to subject matter competence and Professional Level II preparation. Approximately 220 stakeholders attended one or both of these two day sessions. In addition, staff had similar conversations at the California Council on Teacher Education, the Teacher Education Division of the Council of Exceptional Children, and the statewide meeting of the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) Directors during the fall of 2006. Approximately 200 persons attended these professional association meetings.

Several themes emerged from the field discussions. The notes from the field discussions and a summary organized by themes were provided to the Special Education Credential Workgroup (Workgroup). These themes, listed below, were also used to help frame the questions in the web-based job analysis and became areas of focus for staff review of the requirements and procedures of other states as well as federal requirements.

- Structure of the Education Specialist Credential
- Transitions and Professional Level Instruction
- Subject Matter Requirements
- Revisions in the Credential Program Curriculum

In addition to conducting the stakeholder meetings, the Commission staff engaged in two other activities related to special education credentials. Revisions to Education Code Sections 44001, 44831, and 44253.1 required that all basic credential holders be prepared to teach English

learners (EL). SB 1969, (Chap. 1178, Stats. of 1994) and SB 2042 (Chap. 548, Stats. of 2002) required that all Multiple and Single Subject teachers have EL preparation as part of the initial teacher preparation, but this requirement had not been extended to Special Education. At the June 2006 Commission meeting, the Commission acted to require all approved Special Education programs to amend their programs to include EL preparation for both preliminary and clear credential holders.

One of the issues addressed by SB 1209 was the concern that there was unnecessary redundancy in credential programs. There was evidence of duplicative coursework and experiences for those seeking both a Multiple Subject Credential and a Special Education Credential. Instances were cited where instruction provided for the Education Specialist Level II (Clear Credential) was too similar to what had been completed at Level I, rather than imparting advanced knowledge as required by Commission standards. The Commission sent an advisory to the deans and directors of all programs that might be affected to alert them about this problem and inform them that instances of redundancy and duplication should be monitored at their campus. The programs were also informed that this concern would be a point of emphasis in the Commission's accreditation process. Concerns about redundancy were also forwarded to the Commission's Workgroup.

In December 2006, the Commission announced a nomination process for the Workgroup. In early January, Workgroup members were selected from over 100 applicants. The first meeting was held on February 23, 2007. The Workgroup was composed of twenty four members at large as well as nine additional appointees who represented the Association of California School Administrators; California Teachers Association; California Federation of Teachers; California School Boards Association; California State University, Chancellor's Office; a liaison from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing; the Department of Education, Special Education Division; and the Advisory Commission on Special Education. The Workgroup has met two days a month since March 2007 and will conclude its meetings in November 2007. A list of the members of the Workgroup may be found in Appendix A.

At the February Workgroup meeting, Dale Janssen, Executive Director of the Commission, and Dr. David Pearson, Commission Chair, addressed the group. The following charge was given to the group.

Members of the Special Education Workgroup will serve under the direction of the Commission and its staff. The Workgroup members will be expected to review background information made available to them by Commission staff, and review the current structure of all Special Education and Other Related Services Credentials to determine if they reflect the effective state policy and practice in Special Education. The Workgroup will help identify the knowledge Special Education teachers need to possess and the appropriate authorizations for serving students with special needs in California schools.

Along with this charge the workgroup was given the set of goals listed below. These goals were derived from the language of SB 1209, the direction the Commission had given to staff when it authorized the formation of the Workgroup, and the concerns expressed by stakeholders at the 14 forums held by the Commission.

- Provide improved services to California's students with disabilities;
- Provide more opportunities to become a special education teacher while reducing redundancies in preparation;
- Improve the skill levels and retention rates among special education teachers;
- Assist local education agencies in meeting their need for qualified special education personnel.

### **Workgroup's Review of Trends and Events that Affect Special Education Certification**

The Workgroup drew on the expertise of state and national organizations to provide background for its deliberations. At the third meeting of the Workgroup, presentations were made by the California Comprehensive Center and the National Center for Special Education Personnel and Related Service Providers. Dr. Phoebe Gillespie of the Personnel Center provided information about the intent of federal policies and about the trends in licensure in other states. She summarized the major trends in the preparation of special education teachers including:

- Increased emphasis on collaborative skills;
- Emphasis on the core curriculum and improving specific pedagogical skills in academic areas; and
- Providing comprehensive preparation as the range of skills and responsibilities needed to be a special education teacher increase.

Dr. Dona Meinders, California Comprehensive Center, provided a valuable summary of the trends in other states. She pointed out that state certification systems fall into three categories: Generalist, Categorical and Credentials based on the level of severity of the disability. Twenty-nine per cent of the states allow special education teachers to teach any disability category. These same states also have two to three disability-specific categories. Only two states have a single special education specialist credential. Thirty-three percent of the states use Categorical Certificates which are disability specific. Thirty-eight per cent of the states use categories similar to California's current system, i.e. mild/moderate or moderate/severe authorization. Forty-eight states have two to fifteen additional endorsements or categories of credentials.

Both presentations identified significant national trends including the role of the federal government and its influence on state policies, the changing role of the special education teacher, the increased frequency of identification of disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder, and the needed expansion of services to more areas of disability, such as those who are medically fragile and children and youth with traumatic brain injury. Both presentations emphasized the importance of providing opportunities to learn the core curriculum for all students in all settings from birth to age 22 and the challenge of preparing special education teachers for new and expanding responsibilities.

Janet Canning of the California Department of Education (CDE) provided insights into federal expectations as set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and the CDE and State Board of Education's implementation of federal requirements. Also, Commission staff provided an extensive review of credentialing related to special education.



## Summary of Special Education Legislation and Policy Decisions

The Commission on Teacher Credentialing implemented the current Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credentials structure in 1997. Over the past three decades, there have been a large number of statutory and regulatory changes made in special education policy. In order to provide a context for the current review of the structure of special education credentials, the Workgroup was presented with Table 1 below that provides a summary of California statutes and policy changes that have impacted special education since the Commission was established.

**Table 1**

<b>Credential Impacted</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Summary of the Legislative or Policy Change</b>
Ryan	1970	Established four Specialist Instruction Credentials in Special Education: Learning Handicapped, Severely Handicapped, Communicatively Handicapped and Physically Handicapped (including orthopedically handicapped and visually handicapped).
Clinical Rehabilitative Services	1976	Authorizations in Language, Speech and Hearing; Special Class Authorization; Audiology; and Orientation and Mobility.
Special Education Specialist	1978	Established a separate Special Education Specialist Credential authorizing those teaching blind or partially seeing students, the Visually Handicapped Special Education Specialist Credential, was established.
Resource Specialist	1980	Resource Specialist Certificate of Competence went into effect along with “local assessor agencies” to determine the candidate’s proficiency level on all competencies required for this certificate.
Adapted Physical Education	1980	Established an authorization for Adapted Physical Education Credential and program standards were adopted in December 1992
Special Education	1985	Regulations were established requiring that all candidates who were initially employed to teach Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED) students after September 1988 hold an authorization for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed.
	1990	Out-of-state candidates are given a five-year period to complete the basic teaching credential requirements
Education Specialist	1993	The Commission through Title 5 Regulations eliminates the requirement of a prerequisite multiple of single subject credential for special education credential holders.
Education Specialist	1996	The Commission acts to restructure Special Education Credentials including: creation of Mild/Moderate, Moderate/Severe and maintain separate and distinct “Low Incidence” Credentials; create a two-level credential structure; add an early childhood special education credential; and consolidate Language Speech and Hearing Credentials in a single structure and meet federal requirements for the credential.
Education Specialist	2006	English learner authorization required for Education Specialist credentials.

<b>Credential Impacted</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Summary of the Legislative or Policy Change</b>
Clinical Rehabilitative Services	2006	AB 2837 requires Speech Language Pathology Credentials to include two levels of preparation including participation in a clinical fellowship year and completion of a master's degree in speech-language pathology from an accredited college or university program.
Education Specialist	2007	SB 1209 allows teachers who hold out-of-state special education credentials to qualify for California credentials without any additional California requirements except in the area of English Learner competence.

In addition to the measures listed above, other significant federal legislation and policy practices have occurred, which influence the structure and requirements of special education and other related services credentials such as:

- Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 and its ensuing reauthorization legislation, Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1986 and again in 1997 the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) ensures that all handicapped children have available to them a free appropriate public education which includes special education and related services to meet their unique needs; and
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) has had significant influence on services for students with disabilities although its primary focus is directed toward the general student population. Subject matter compliance of middle and secondary teachers currently is misaligned with the requirements for serving students in these settings.
- In 2003, the State Board of Education limited demonstration of elementary subject matter competence to those new teachers passing the Multiple Subjects examination for the purpose of classification as a NCLB “Highly Qualified” teacher.

### **Principles that Guided the Workgroup**

In 1975, Public Law 94-142 provided principles upon which special education services are based. Although these principles have been revised over the years, they continue to guide special education services and seem to be as appropriate today as they were forty years ago. Below are the principles that guided the Workgroup and the recommendations that follow:

- All children deserve a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Educators need to understand this in order to provide comprehensive services for children with disabilities.
- Given that the special education is a service not a place, it is critical that a student with special needs is provided individualized, explicit instruction by educators who have knowledge of appropriate interventions, accommodations, adaptations, or modifications that support access to the curriculum.
- Ability to deliver special education services across the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) should be taught to all Level I Education Specialist credential candidates.
- The unique, individual needs of each child/student are identified in an Individual Family Services Plan or Individualized Education Program (IFSP/IEP). This plan/program

describes the performance level, collaboration efforts and the delivery services for the student.

Throughout the discussions of the Workgroup, four questions prompted by the direction given in SB 1209 were posed. The following questions guided the deliberations and were considered each time the Workgroup reached agreements and made recommendations. Each time a subcommittee reported, part of their remarks would include answers to these questions. When the open forums were held in July and August, the more than 200 participants were also asked to offer advice with respect to these four questions.

1. What have these recommendations done to improve service delivery for children with special needs?
2. How do these recommendations streamline the current process?
3. What redundancy has been addressed and alleviated?
4. How have these recommendations improved access to and retention of effective special education personnel?

## Section II

### Resources Used by the Workgroup

Staff provided an extensive amount of information to the Workgroup in the course of their deliberations. As previously discussed, information was provided about new federal requirements and the reform activities in other states outlined in the first section of this report as well as materials such as those in the Appendices attached to this report. In addition to that information, the Workgroup focused considerable attention on the review of information provided by the Commission and California Department of Education about State requirements and quantitative data about special education needs for services and supply and demand for educators. This section summarizes those quantitative data reviewed by the Workgroup.

#### The Demand for Special Education Services in California

The Workgroup reviewed data for the number of students with special needs served by California public schools. Table 2 shows the number of students with special needs who received services in the past five years. The overall number of students receiving services has remained relatively constant over the past five years. Only one area Specific Learning Disability (e.g., students who are dyslexic), has shown a significant decrease (-11%) in students needing services. Two areas, Other Health Impairments (e.g., students with epilepsy) and students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, have seen a 65% and 53% increases respectively in students requiring services. One anomaly identified in the data is related to those children needing Deaf-Blind Services. According to data from California Deaf-Blind Services, the count of children needing services has exceeded 900 for the last three years, yet the California Special Education Management Information System show fewer than 300 annually receiving services.

**Table 2**  
**Number of Students (age 0-22) Receiving Special Education Services by Disability**  
**2002-2007**

<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>
Mental Retardation	43,302	44,017	44,263	43,739	43,522
Hard of Hearing	6,934	7,200	7,608	8,150	8,241
Deaf	4,540	4,510	4,462	4,337	4,242
Speech/Language Impairment	172,417	175,927	176,265	181,319	178,599
Visual Impairment	4,624	4,599	4,798	4,761	4,697
Emotional Disturbance	26,144	27,292	27,912	27,512	27,081
Orthopedic Impairment	15,131	15,074	15,321	15,653	15,429
Other Health Impairment	28,161	32,083	35,650	40,081	43,498
Specific Learning Disability	344,571	337,884	328,381	314,817	306,950
Deaf-Blindness	207	215	266	229	207
Multiple Disability	6,670	6,606	5,926	6,125	5,673
Autism	21,066	24,943	29,370	34,668	39,711
Traumatic Brain Injury	1,565	1,630	1,747	1,787	1,798
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>675,332</b>	<b>681,980</b>	<b>681,969</b>	<b>683,178</b>	<b>679,648</b>

Source: California Special Education Management Information System, California Department of Education.

### **Meeting the Supply for Special Education Teachers**

For the last twelve years, the Commission has been concerned about the availability of special education teachers to meet the need of school districts and the high numbers of emergency permits granted. The reforms made in 1997 were designed to help alleviate special education teacher shortages while improving the quality of their preparation. Among the measures implemented were:

- Elimination of the prerequisite general education credential yet assuring that special education candidates gained knowledge, skills and experience in general education;
- Implementation of a teaching credential system that allowed candidates to serve a range of disabilities i.e. Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe Disabilities, Visual Impairments, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Physical and Health Impairments, and Early Childhood Special Education;
- Changes to Commission policies and standards to provide better services in areas such as Severely Emotional Disturbed and Early Childhood Special Education;
- Additional focus given to general education content and teacher communication skills with regards to collaboration and consultative skills;
- Alignment of Speech-Language Pathology Program Standards with federal requirements to satisfy the federal requirement for the highest standard.
- Creation of a two-level Education Specialist Credential, Preliminary Level I and Professional Clear Level II. The second level was established to provide candidates the opportunity for advanced preparation and knowledge and support while they were employed as special education teachers

In 2005-06, a total of 3,514 credentials were issued in Education Specialist programs in California and another 335 credentials were issued to out-of-state prepared teachers. As Table 3 shows, among the credentials issued, more than three-fourths (79%) were issued in Mild/Moderate and one-sixth (15%) in Moderate/Severe Disabilities. Early Childhood Special Education, Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, Visual Impairments, Physical and Health Impairments together comprised 6% of the total credentials issued to California prepared teachers.

The figures cited above show a dramatic increase in the total number of teaching credentials issued between 2001-02 and 2005-06. In 2001-02, approximately 1,900 credentials were issued. During the past five years, credentials have increased by 1,600, or overall increase of 84%, and there has been a steady increase in all six areas of Education Specialist Credentials. Further, the proportion of credentials issued in the six areas remained steady during the past five years.

Supply has increased for a number of reasons. Universities have increased the size of their Education Specialist programs. The number of university based intern programs has doubled in the past five years. In addition, five district intern Education Specialist programs were developed and had prepared 284 candidates by 2005-06 and had 617 participants in 2005-06. The number of graduates from Education Specialist intern programs has increased five fold in size in the last five years.

**Table 3**  
**Preliminary Education Specialist Credentials Issued, 2001-2006**

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	5 year change %
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	28	45	56	38	44	57.1%
Early Childhood Special Education	82	105	90	120	123	50.0%
Mild/Moderate Disabilities	1,549	1,876	2,221	2,866	2,780	79.5%
Moderate/Severe Disabilities	240	333	430	482	535	122.9%
Physical and Health Impairments	6	16	27	8	7	16.7%
Visual Impairments	8	17	17	18	25	212.5%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,913</b>	<b>2,392</b>	<b>2,841</b>	<b>3,532</b>	<b>3,514</b>	<b>83.7%</b>

Source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Approved programs for special education teacher preparation continue to increase. Table 4 identifies the status of program providers. The number of Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe programs increased by nearly 70 percent while Low Incidence credential programs remained relatively stable. This greatest increase was in the number of internships in all credential categories.

**Table 4**  
**Comparison of the Number of Approved Education Specialist Credential Programs**  
**2000 and 2007**

PROGRAM	JANUARY 2000	OCTOBER 2007
Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities	35	53
Education Specialist: Moderate/Severe Disabilities	28	38
Education Specialist: M/M, M/S, Low Incidence or ECSE Internships	18	43
Education Specialist: Early Childhood Special Education	11	12
Education Specialist: Early Childhood Special Education Certificate	8	10
Education Specialist: Visual Impairments	2	2
Education Specialist: Deaf and Hard of Hearing	7	7
Education Specialist: Physical and Other Health Impairments	4	3

Source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Even with the significant increase in the number of programs and the number of credentials issued, the number of credential permits (emergency and provisional) shows that teacher

preparation programs are not keeping up with the needs in school districts. Table 5 shows that there has been a decrease in the number of emergency (provisional) permits in most years between 2001-02 and 2004-05 compared to the year before. However, in 2005-2006 these trends have either stalled or reversed. In 2005-06, the Commission switched from issuing Emergency Permits to issuing more restrictive and focused Provisional Internship Permits and Short Term Staff Permits.

**Table 5**  
**Number of Emergency Permits Issued in Special Education, 2001-2006**

TYPE	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06*
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	53	51	30	45	45
Early Childhood Special Education	103	103	100	94	132
Mild/Moderate Disabilities	1,868	1,723	1,266	1,326	1,672
Moderate/Severe Disabilities	536	471	401	415	558
Physical and Health Impairments	26	23	12	14	18
Visual Impairments	18	18	19	17	7

Source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing

\* 2005-06 data includes emergency, provisional internship, and short-term staff permits

According to the study, *A Possible Dream: Retaining California Teachers So All Students Learn*<sup>1</sup>, released by The Center for Teacher Quality, Office of the Chancellor, California State University, the following data were noted about special education teachers.

- 14% of all Special Education teachers do not have an appropriate teaching credential;
- 49% of first-year special education teachers were not certified to teach special education;
- Esch (2005)<sup>2</sup> cited that 22% of Special Education teachers working in high poverty schools were not certified to teach special education and that 6% were not certified to teach in low-poverty schools; and
- Over a third (53%) of special education credential holders who participated in this study are teaching in general education classrooms, which also may be contributing to the shortage of teachers serving students with special needs.

Futernick (2007) suggests that attrition from the specific discipline along with the attrition from the profession itself significantly contributes to the severe shortage of Special Education teachers in California. He went on to identify various reasons including bureaucratic impediments such as a lack of understanding from colleagues about Special Education challenges and working conditions for this exit from Special Education assignments.

In spite of the efforts by teacher preparation programs to increase the supply of Education Specialist Credential programs, they have not been able to keep up with demand. Table 6 was created by comparing Table 3 data with Table 5. This table shows that in the most of the past five years in most credential areas there were more emergency/provisional/permits issued than preliminary credentials. However, in all six credential categories, when the ratio in 2001-02 is

<sup>1</sup> Futernick, K. (2007). *A Possible Dream: Retaining California Teachers So All Students Learn*. Center for Teacher Quality, Office of the Chancellor, California State University.

<sup>2</sup> Esch, C.E., Chang-Ross, C.M., Guha, R., Humphrey, D.C., Shields, P.M., Tiffany-Morales, J.D., et al. (2005). *The Status of the Teaching Profession 2005*. Santa Cruz, CA: The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning.

compared to 2005-06 data, there has been considerable improvement. According to the data, the ratio of Emergency Permits/Preliminary Credential to Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe credentials have been reduced by half. It is also evident that in four of the six areas there has been a considerable reduction in the number of emergency/provisional certificates. Data on the number of Education Specialist Credential waivers also show that progress has been made. In 2001-02, 1,367 Education Specialist Waivers were issued. That number was reduced to 110 by 2005-06, a twelve fold decrease.

**Table 6**  
**Ratio of Special Education Teachers Fully Prepared to Emergency Permits\***  
**2001-2006**

TYPE	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06**
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	1:1.89	1:1.13	1:0.54	1:1.18	1:1.02
Early Childhood Special Education	1:1.26	1:0.98	1:1.11	1:0.78	1:1.07
Mild/Moderate Disabilities	1:1.21	1:0.92	1:0.57	1:0.46	1:0.60
Moderate/Severe Disabilities	1:2.23	1:1.41	1:0.93	1:0.86	1:1.04
Physical and Health Impairments	1:4.33	1:1.44	1:0.44	1:1.75	1:2.57
Visual Impairments	1:2.25	1:1.06	1:1.12	1:0.94	1:0.28

Source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing

\* Example: For every fully credentialed teacher (i.e., 28) teaching Deaf Hard of Hearing students in 2001-02, there are 1.89 teachers (i.e., 53) serving on emergency permits teaching DHH students.

\*\* Data for 2005-06 includes Emergency Permits, Provisional Internship Permits, and Short-Term Staff Permits.

### **Supply of Clinical Rehabilitative Services Credential Holders**

In addition to Education Specialist “teaching” credentials, California statutes authorize the Commission to issue services credentials that provide particular “services” to students in schools. These services are usually clinical in nature. The Clinical Rehabilitative Services Credential: Orientation and Mobility provides blind, visually impaired and deaf-blind individuals with age-appropriate, hands-on experiences in natural travel settings to assist in the development of a meaningful conceptual understanding of home, school and community environment. There have been two such programs since the mid 1970s. The Clinical Rehabilitative Services Credential: Audiology authorizes individuals to provide audiological assessment, tympanometry, and management of individual and classroom amplification systems and assistive listening devices. The programs have become doctoral level programs and very few, if any, are specifically offering a credential at this time.

In 2006, AB 2837 (Chap 581) changed the Clinical Rehabilitative Services: Language, Speech and Hearing (CRS:LSH) Services Credential to Speech-Language Pathology Services Credential (SLP), requiring a two level (preliminary and clear) credential. This became effective January 1, 2007. The legislation specified that the Preliminary Credential shall be valid for a period of two years. The second level required that the holder complete a supervised thirty-six week practicum and pass the national exam authorized by the national professional organization, the American Speech and Language Association (ASHA).

The shortage in the Clinical Rehabilitative Services Credential: Language, Speech, and Hearing (CRS:LSH) continues to be one of the most critical of all special education areas. There are



currently 14 Commission approved programs. Based on the necessity to be in compliance with federal requirement, in 1997 the CRS:LSH credential was modified to require a Masters Degree as the base credential. At the same time the Commission stopped issuing the Communication Handicapped (teaching) Credential because the credential did not meet the requirements of federal statute. One new program was approved at the October Committee on Accreditation meeting, and two additional programs are in the development stage at their institutions. At the time of writing this report, ASHA has a moratorium on approving any new programs. This has impeded implementation of these new programs and it is unlikely that there will be graduates from the new programs before 2010.

The CRS:LSH and the SLP credentials are unique as they are the only Commission issued credentials that require a Masters Degree to achieve a Preliminary Credential. Preparation provided in these programs also authorizes service in hospitals and clinics, and many of the graduates of these programs are employed in these settings rather than in schools. The 2004 reauthorization of IDEA reversed earlier requirements for the Masters Degree for Speech Language Pathologists.

Table 7 presents data on the number of credentials issued to Clinical Rehabilitative Services Credential holders over the past five years. Although there is some variation, the numbers are quite consistent. The last row of Table 7 presents information on the number of Credential Waivers that are issued in CRS:LSH. Although no emergency/provisional permits are issued to SLP holders, a significant number of waivers are issued. In 2004-5 there were 4,866 persons employed in schools as Speech-Language Pathologists. In that same year, there were 378 waivers granted, which is eight percent of the total of SLP serving special needs students with communication disorders in 2004-05. There is clear evidence that approved programs have not been able to supply the sufficient numbers of Speech-Language Pathologists that schools need. The ratio of credentials to waivers for SLP is similar to those shown in Table 6 concerning the ratio of SLP credentials issued annually versus the number of waivers issued. There are 1.25 wavers for every credential issued in Speech-Language Pathology.

**Table 7**  
**Clinical Rehabilitative Services Credentials Issued, 2001-2006**

<b>CREDENTIAL AREA</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Audiology	0	3	3	3	3
Language, Speech, and Hearing	399	392	345	291	325
Language, Speech, and Hearing Including Special Class Auth.	22	18	23	17	13
Language, Speech, Hearing, and Audiology	2	3	1	3	1
Language, Speech, Hearing, and Audiology Including Special Class Auth.	1	0	0	1	1
Orientation and Mobility	12	25	16	17	22
Credential Waivers issued for Language, Speech, and Hearing*	360	398	364	378	407

Source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing

\*Waiver numbers are not included in the yearly totals

### **Summary of Supply Data**

There is clear evidence that there have been increases in the supply of special education teachers in California. The five year increase is more than 80%. Both university based and district based programs have increased the supply of teachers for special needs students. In the area of Speech-Language Pathology there has been nearly a 20% decrease in the number of candidates seeking credentials. The continued requests from districts for emergency/provisional permits and waivers for teachers show that the state is still experiencing and will likely continue to experience severe shortages in Special Education and Other Related Services Credentials.

Meeting the needs of students with special needs and the districts that serve them is also influenced by data about the tendencies of Special Education and Other Related Services teachers to stay in their positions. There are reports that show that the rate of special educators who leave their classrooms is at least as high as general education teachers. In addition, an unusually high number of teachers will retire in the next few years and the number of new teachers entering the field is expected to decline. The Futernick (2007) study suggests “Special Education teachers leave classrooms for many of the same reasons that general educators do. However there are reasons unique to special education. They include but are not limited to:

- 66% cited inadequate support for special education students i.e. working conditions;
- 60% cited a lack of understanding from colleagues about special education challenges; and
- 58% cited leaving in part due to the complex and laborious paperwork”

Contrary to popular belief, inadequate compensation was not the number one reason for those who leave, but ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the survey conducted by Futernick.

Although there has been an increase in the number of special education credentials issued in the past five years and the overall demand for services has remained fairly constant, the numbers of permit and waiver requests show that there is much to be done to meet the needs of students with special needs. With these data in mind the Workgroup began its task to find ways to bring more qualified special educators into schools, provide more efficient and effective preparation and support special educators in ways that would cause them to want to remain in California’s public schools.

### **Section III**

## **Recommendations for Modifications of the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credential Structure**

The Special Education Credential Workgroup recommends that the preparation options available be expanded to allow greater access and opportunities to become a special education teacher. Access would be expanded in three major ways.

- A Learning to Teach Continuum similar to the one for Multiple and Single Subject Credential Candidates would be implemented. This Continuum includes multiple entry points, careful and continuous advisement, sequenced field experiences and support of candidates at all levels including the first years of teaching. These teaching opportunities would allow Education Specialist Credential candidates to apply academic and pedagogical knowledge in both protected and authentic settings throughout the teacher preparation experience.
- Improve access to quality preparation programs including expanding articulation among community colleges and four year institutions, better advisement and more expansive recruitment efforts. Use distance learning technology to increase access of candidates to programs particularly in low incidence areas.
- The areas of Education Specialist Certification would be maintained, but the authorization would be expanded to allow the credential to be more flexibly used. This flexibility would be particularly important in low incidence areas and in more geographically isolated areas of state. Current Commission Certificate programs would be maintained and expanded to allow teachers to expand their expertise without another credential program. An Education Specialist Credential in Communication Development should be developed to provide communication and language development services specifically focused on the needs of special needs students in schools.

### **Providing a Continuum of Learning to Teach Options**

The California Learning to Teach Continuum provides opportunities for potential special education teachers to enter through various experiential avenues. These paths enable candidates with or without previous special education experiences to consider completing a special education credential program. It is the recommendation of the Workgroup that multiple pathways into special education teaching be available to persons at different points in their lives. For persons just out of high school who know that they want to teach students with disabilities, there should be a route. For those young adults who decide during their undergraduate years or soon after graduation, there should be an option. For paraprofessionals or Speech-Language Aides, there should be an opportunity to be part of a career ladder program that will lead to certification. For second career professionals, there should be a way to pursue their calling into special education. For parents who have experienced the travails of their own special education child and want to use that experience and teach other children with disabilities, there should be a route.

The Workgroup recommends that there be options available for those who want to become special education teachers which accommodate those individual's life circumstances. Each of the routes would be subject to the same standards and requirements although the use of

assessments and granting equivalencies to meet these requirements is encouraged and expected. Not all pathways would be available at all teacher preparation institutions. Which preparation programs an agency elects to develop is completely the prerogative of that institution.

Current California statutes allow variety of options to become a teacher in California. SB 2042 (Chap 548, Stats of 2002) identified those options. These included options that would integrate subject matter and pedagogical preparation, options that would subject matter preparation to be followed by pedagogical preparation, and intern preparation where teacher preparation programs and schools districts would enter into a partnership to provide teacher preparation while the candidate is employed as teacher of record. The workgroup endorses these options and encourages their use to provide Education Specialist teachers for both elementary and secondary settings. The Workgroup recommends implementation of a variation on the integrated teacher preparation program- a Special Populations Major.

#### Special Populations Major

This degree program would combine general education coursework that would emphasize the subjects taught in public school core curriculum, an academic major that focuses on developmental and special population issues with many practicum opportunities, and special education pedagogy. The integrated program would result in a Baccalaureate Degree and a Preliminary Education Specialist Credential. State NCLB requirements would require passage of the CSET: Multiple Subject exam.

This degree program will focus on individuals with disabilities from birth through adulthood. Major areas of consideration will be on causal, cultural, social and occupational factors as well as typical and atypical human development. An overview of both federal and state legal issues will be addressed. Early field experience and service learning projects will be included in this major.

#### Undergraduate Major in a Content Area

SB 1209 changed subject matter requirements for out of state prepared teachers to allow individuals with basic skills, a baccalaureate degree, and an out of state credential to earn a preliminary credential. Subject matter is not a requirement that is reviewed to earn the California credential. Out of state prepared teachers are considered to be NCLB subject matter compliant if deemed so by the other state. Other states use a variety of options to be NCLB compliant including units, majors, and degrees.

Currently California prepared single subject teachers have the choice of completing an approved 45 semester unit program or completing the CSET single subject exam. NCLB Secondary Subject Matter Requirements approved by SBE and the Title 5 Regulations allow candidates who have a subject matter major of a minimum of 32 units in one of the four core areas (English, Math, History and Science). These candidates are NCLB “Highly Qualified”. The Workgroup recommends that those who have met this requirement be eligible for entry into an Education Specialist Credential Program whether they are prepared in another state or in California.

#### Teaching Performance Assessment for Education Specialist Teachers

Senate Bill 2042 set forth requirements for a Teaching Performance Assessment for candidates for multiple subject and single subject teaching credentials. The Teaching Performance

Assessment (TPA) measures a candidate's ability to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) determined to be essential for a beginning teacher. In California these essential KSAs are called Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE). Based on expert opinion and field review through a Job Analysis by teachers and other special education professionals, the most critical KSAs for a beginning special education teacher can be determined, and these would become the TPE for special education. These expectations would be taught in the courses and applied in the various field settings by the candidate. They would be assessed in the performance measures that are created. These measures would be both generic to teaching such as content specific pedagogy, planning, assessment, and teaching English learners, but would also include specific special education knowledge, skills and abilities such as intervention strategies, IEPs, dynamic assessment and teaching a culminating lesson using disability specific differentiation strategies. Satisfactory performance with students on the TPA would be required for recommendation of a Preliminary Credential.

#### Induction for Clear Credential

Induction is the period of time when a teacher with a preliminary credential begins a higher level of training while on-the-job. In California, the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment/ Induction Program, provides intensive support from a teacher holding the same credential and assigned to the same school. More than 27,000 first and second year Multiple and Single Subject teachers are being served by this program 2006-07. The Workgroup recommends that BTSA/ Induction be extended to Education Specialist Credential holders.

Induction and support must be individualized in order to best prepare the Education Specialist to effectively serve the candidate. These programs, which lead to a clear credential, include two parts: on-the-job training and advanced coursework. The two parts would be addressed in the candidates' Individual Induction Program (IIP). The plan should specify experiences and tasks that should be completed as well as contain a balanced representation of advanced academic coursework and local approved professional development activities; e.g., district workshops, professional organization participation, experience equivalencies within the IIP toward clearing the credential.

Advanced specialization coursework shall not exceed 12 semester units. The range of disabilities in the student population with whom education specialists work, the extensive specialized knowledge and skills required to work with this population, the variety of instructional settings in which candidates teach, the multiplicity of roles required of candidates, and the application of assistive and other technologies for student access and learning are features of the tasks of Educational Specialist Credential holders that make their credential unique and challenging. Given these differences from a general education credential, there is a need for on the job support and advanced coursework leading to a clear credential.

It is recommended that there be only one induction program required for a candidate to clear the preliminary teaching credentials held. For those holding more than one credential, such as a general education and Education Specialist credential or more than one Education Specialist credential, the IIP be developed to allow one induction experience to count for both. If someone were to add an additional credential later, the candidate would only complete the additional coursework for that authorization.

Teacher preparation programs are in the best position to provide course work and that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are best able to provide site based professional training and support related to the District. Drawing on the strengths of each, Induction programs for Education Specialist Credentials can be beneficial in many ways including providing teachers with the complex range of skills necessary. Programs offer support to novice teachers to apply this new knowledge. Induction programs that develop strong partnerships will result in enabling teachers who can help their students achieve and who will stay in teaching because they believe they are part of a supportive team.

The partners in the induction program should clearly define roles described in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which indicates specific responsibilities, roles and timelines between the Teacher Preparation Program (Institutions of Higher Education - IHE) and/or the County Office of Education (COE) and Local Education Agency (LEA) and the candidate. All partners should sign off on the Clear Credential Recommendation

### **Enhancing Access to Special Education Credentials**

In addition to providing preparation programs for those who decide they want to be special education teachers at different times in their lives, there should be an increased emphasis on recruitment, transition and advisement to those who want to become special educators. Since more than half of those who become special education teachers begin their collegiate careers in community colleges, it is critical that articulation agreements between four year institutions and community colleges include information on the opportunities available in special education and the requirements that the candidates need to meet.

#### **Recruitment and Advisement**

Programs also need to more actively recruit candidates that have not been traditionally the focus of programs. For example, nationally only fourteen percent of special education teachers are male. Internship programs in California have shown that active recruitment of males can provide a significant new source of recruits. Many programs have found parents of children with special needs and candidates with disabilities own life experiences provide these candidates with special sensitivities to children with special needs.

All preliminary credential options should provide carefully delineated coursework routes, extensive advisement and multiple opportunities for early field experiences. Support of students who want to work in special education should begin when they identify their intent to seek this major. Advisement should be the first step in the support system that follows them throughout the learning to teach process and guides them in the courses and experiences they need. This advisement is especially important for those who begin their collegiate career at a community college. Because NCLB/IDEA requires that candidates make a decision about whether to follow an elementary or secondary subject matter path, advisement is even more critical to prevent taking courses that do not lead to their career goal. Early field experiences help candidates discover if special education is the correct career path. Because of the complexities of working with special needs students it is important that candidates have an opportunity in a protected setting to be sure that they are entering that right field before they have taken too many courses.

### Alternative Program Delivery Options

Special Education teacher preparation program providers should utilize distance learning mechanisms to deliver instruction when possible. This is particularly important in low incidence programs to assure access to specialized preparation in all regions of the state.

Programs, particularly low incidence programs, should share candidates to allow instruction in foundational knowledge, core curriculum and early field experiences be provided in locations convenient to their home or through distance learning. Programs should encourage transfer of credit and multi-campus programs so expertise in content areas can be shared as is already done in some programs.

Programs should pay particular attention to recruiting diverse candidates into Education Specialist programs including actively recruiting candidates with disabilities, those from ethnic and racial groups underrepresented in the teaching workforce, and encourage males to become special education teachers, as they represent only about fourteen percent of special education teachers nationwide.

### **Expanding Special Education Credentials and Credential Authorizations**

In the stakeholder meetings, the public forums and the review of the credential structure both inside California and in other states there was discussion of the most effective way to structure credentials to provide the best preparation to special educators and the best services to students with special needs. There was discussion of returning to the pre-1997 requirement of a multiple or single subject prerequisite credential. There was discussion of moving to a generic special education credential as two states use or adopting a generic credential plus specific authorizations as eighteen states use. After deliberation about possible options the overwhelming consensus of the Workgroup was that the current structure of broadly based credentials and authorizations as well as credentials that focus on low incidence areas provided the most comprehensive offerings that would provide the most effective access to services for students with special needs.

The Workgroup did find that there were several areas where adjustments needed to be made to provide better and more flexible services to students with special needs. For example there was complete agreement to expand the authorization and preparation in all Education Specialist Credentials to include autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Currently, children with autism are served by individuals holding the Moderate/Severe Credential, although many children with Autism may have a range of abilities and needs on the spectrum, and some have additional other special needs. By adding ASD to all special education credential authorizations, it assures that students identified with ASD will be served in all environments with educators who possess the skills to do so effectively. The Credential Structure Chart (Chart 1) summarizes the current, existing areas of specialization and recommended changes, as well as current and recommended grade levels.

### Proposed Education Specialist: Communication Development Credential

In 1994, federal legislation changed the requirements for those who could offer speech language services in schools. Candidates were required to hold a Master's degree and meet certain standards set by the national association, the American Speech and Hearing Association. The Commission changed its requirements including Standards and Preconditions to align with those

changes in federal regulations. The Commission required a Masters Degree for the Clinical Rehabilitative Services: Language Speech and Hearing Credential. The Commission also stopped offering the Communication Handicapped Teaching Credential since it did not meet the IDEA minimum requirements.

In 2004, IDEA requirements related to Language, Speech and Hearing were revised allowing more flexibility for states. The Masters degree was no longer the minimum requirement. This allows California to reexamine the credential structure for Speech-Language Pathologists and explore ways to improve access to communication development services for students and schools.

The Workgroup recommends that speech-language pathology credential programs should be expanded to allow a continuum of opportunities. Because the current structure of Clinical Rehabilitative Services: Language, Speech and Hearing and Speech-Language Pathology Credentials includes a range of employment possibilities including work in hospitals and clinics,



## Chart 1

### Proposed Revisions in Credential Authorizations and Structure

The table outlines the following: (1) current credential structure and recommended changes to each area, (2) current CTC Certificates of Authorization and recommendations for additional certificates, (3) current Certificates of Competence (change title to Area of Specialization) and recommendations for additional Areas of Specialization, (4) and the addition of the Education Specialist: Communication Development Credential.

Current Credential	Current Areas of Specialization	Recommendation	Current Grade Level	Grade Level Recommendation
Mild/Moderate (M/M)	Specific Learning Disabilities; Mild to Moderate Mental Retardation; ADHD; Emotional Disturbance	+ Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorder + Traumatic Brain Injury-Mild Cognitive deficits + Other Health Impairment	K-12	K-12 to age 22
Moderate/Severe (M/S)	Autism; Deaf-blindness; Moderate to Severe Mental Retardation; Multiple Disabilities; Emotional Disturbance	+Traumatic Brain Injury-Moderate cognitive deficits + Other Health Impairment Ability to add a CTC certificate of specialization in the area of PHI	K-12	K-12 to age 22
Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH)	Deafness, Hearing Impairment, Deaf-Blindness	+ Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorder + Multiple disabilities where primary disability is DHH Ability to add a CTC certificate of specialization in the area of Deaf-Blindness	Birth to age 22	Birth to age 22
Visual Impairments (VI)	Blindness, Visual Impairments, Deaf-Blindness	+ Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorder + Multiple Disabilities where primary disability is VI Ability to add a CTC certificate of specialization in the area of deaf-blindness	Birth to age 22	Birth to age 22
Physical & Health Impairments (PHI)	Orthopedic Impairments, Other Health Impairment, Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury	+Autism, Autism Spectrum Disorder Change Traumatic Brain Injury to moderate to severe Traumatic Brain Injury w/orthopedic issues & medical needs	Birth to age 22	Birth to age 22
Early Childhood Special Ed. (ECSE)	Includes the Mild/Moderate & Moderate/Severe disabilities listed above	None	Birth-Pre K	Birth-Pre K
Clinical Rehabilitative (CRS)	Orientation & Mobility Audiology	None	Pre K-Adult	Birth to age 22
Speech-Language Pathology Services Credential (SLP)	Provide language, speech, hearing, services may include Special Class authorization	None	Pre K-Adult	Birth to age 22
Recommended Credential		Area of Specialization	Grade Level Service	
Education Specialist: Communication Development (CD)		Provide services to students with language and communication development needs, e.g., autism, dyslexia	Birth to age 22	

Source: Special Education Credential Workgroup and Commission on Teacher Credentialing

as well as schools, the preparation is diffused to include instruction and clinical experiences not entirely germane to working in schools

In response to the repeated calls for a new speech/language credential from numerous stakeholders at meetings held around the state and in Sacramento, the Workgroup recommends the addition of a new Education Specialist Teaching Credential. The structure of the instructional program could be streamlined to focus on those skills and knowledge necessary to work in schools. This is a new teaching credential, and the Workgroup suggests a title such as Education Specialist: Communications Development. This credential would be the seventh Education Specialist Credential and would focus on the full range of communication and language development skills taught and remediated in schools. The curriculum would focus on school based issues and the knowledge and skills necessary to work with children who have language delays. The credential will cover birth to age 22.

The Workgroup emphasizes that the new credential does not replace the current Speech Language Pathology Services credential. No recommendations are made to change the structure of that credential or the waiver for that credential. However, the Workgroup does believe that when this credential is in place, the number of waivers requested by districts will be reduced in similar proportion to the way that waivers have reduced for Education Specialist Credentials (i.e., a 10 fold reduction.)

The proposed new structure of the credential will offer multiple points of entry for those interested in working in the schools with children who have language development needs. The Workgroup believes that this credential will attract a more diverse population, with an expertise in language development to work with children in the schools. The new credential structure for Education Specialist: Communication Development offers the following to potential candidates and to districts:

- A career ladder for students who obtain the AA degree and become Speech and Language Pathology Assistants (SLPAs) while working in the schools. As a SLPA, students may complete the upper division coursework for the BA/BS in Communication Sciences and Disorders and then move on either the teaching or services credential.
- Options for paid internships during the post-baccalaureate portion of the program.
- An additional option for credentialed general education teachers to move into special education. Teachers would not repeat coursework that meets the requirements for the new credential.
- Opportunities for districts to partner with Schools/Colleges of Education as they recruit, train, and retrain experts in language development and communication disorders.
- Opportunities for educators who have expertise in general education, language development and/or special education to add this credential and use their general education expertise in new ways or to begin a different career in the schools.
- An opportunity to build a literacy-communication continuum of services that will enhance the ability of all students to learn the core curriculum.
- An opportunity for speech therapists, who are currently employed by the schools, and who hold only the BA and the credential (not the California Department of Consumer affairs, SLP Board License), a pathway to stay in the schools without taking the national exam and completing a clinical fellowship experience. These individuals would receive credit based

on their knowledge and skills related to the core curriculum. Allow individuals, who have let their national certification and/or state licensure lapse, a new pathway to return to the schools or work in the schools.

#### Commission Certificates of Authorization

The Workgroup recommends that Certificates of Authorization be available to candidates, and preparation programs. Commission Certificates of Authorization would provide an additional authorization to the holder to perform additional services. These certificates would allow the holder to expand the services that could be rendered without pursuing a new credential. This is particularly important for Education Specialist: Moderate/ Severe Credential holders. Programs would be required to submit the Certificate Coursework to the Commission for approval prior to implementation. Early Childhood Special Education and Resource Specialist Certificates are currently available. Commission Certificates of Authorization would continue be available in these two areas as well as two additional areas therefore certificates would be available in the following areas:

Early Childhood Special Education  
Resource Specialist  
Deaf-Blind  
Physical and Health Impaired

The second type of certificate would be issued by an approved Education Specialist program with the authority to issue the base credential. These certificates would not officially expand the authorization of the credential but would certify that the holder has completed additional preparation in the area of the certificate. Examples would be: Autism Spectrum Disorders, Traumatic Brain Injury, Assistive Technology, Inclusion Specialist, Transition Specialist and Behavior Intervention.

#### **Recommended Modifications of the Education Specialist and Other Related Services Credential Structure**

1. The current Education Specialist Certification and Other Related Services should be maintained, but the authorization would be expanded to allow the credential to be more flexibly used. Autism Spectrum Disorders instruction should be provided in all credential areas and the credential authorization should reflect this preparation.

Rationale: This recommendation would increase the preparation of Education Specialists in the areas of ASD and provide expanded and approved services to ASD students.

2. There should be multiple entry points into special education teacher preparation programs.
  - Entry points should be available for those who know they want to be special education teachers when they enter college.
  - Undergraduate options should be encouraged including an undergraduate “Special Populations” major that would integrate core academic subject matter instruction, coursework about special populations and special education pedagogy and field experiences.
  - Options for those who want to teach secondary special education which combine a major in core academic subject and special education should be available, streamlined and encouraged.

- Options for those who want to seek two credentials; e.g., Multiple Subject and Mild/Moderate or Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe should be available and encouraged.
- Both student teaching based teacher preparation and internships should be available for those who decide they want to teach after achieving their baccalaureate degree or after another career.

Rationale: Potential special education teachers make career decisions at different times in their lives. The credential structure should provide opportunities that allow them to effectively and efficiently pursue their goals. Each of the routes would be subject to the same standards and requirements although the use of assessments and granting equivalencies to meet these requirements is encouraged and expected.

3. All preparation programs should include careful and continuous advisement, carefully sequenced instruction and field experiences, and support systems.

Rationale: Programs should include assistance throughout the program and from the site level support providers during field experiences and induction. Early advice leads to more efficient pathways to certification, and early field experiences help guide prospective teachers in determining if teaching students is the right pathway.

4. To earn a preliminary credential, each candidate shall demonstrate the ability to perform each Teaching Performance Expectation for Education Specialist teachers through a Teaching Performance Assessment.

Rationale: A Teaching Performance Assessment will provide a common measure that can be used by Education Specialist programs to ensure that candidates can perform the Teaching Performance Expectations required in the program.

5. To clear an Education Specialist Credential, a program that combines advanced coursework and supported induction should be available to all preliminary credential holders.
  - If an individual holds more than one credential, the Individualized Induction Plan (IIP) that guides the teacher's advanced preparation should be written to clear all preliminary credentials held.
  - An Individualized Induction Plan completed by the site level support provider, program representative and the credential holder. The plan identifies the coursework, experiences and tasks that should be completed. The plan assesses the candidate's preliminary program to determine if equivalence can be granted for any prior knowledge, skill or ability.
  - The program may include a maximum of 12 units of advanced coursework. These courses must clearly build upon and apply preliminary level knowledge and skills. Coursework should strengthen the ability of the candidate to take on the various roles; e.g., consultant, case manager, team teacher, resource specialist.
  - Professional development activities, by the preparation program and the LEA in partnership, to support the candidate as an effective and reflective practitioner. Opportunities to interact with professional organizations, community service providers, parents and other representatives such as advocates and case workers should be provided.

- The recommendation for the clear credential shall be made jointly by the LEA and the teacher preparation program.

Rationale: There is a considerable body of evidence that supported teachers remain in teaching significantly longer than those who are not supported. An Education Specialist must provide instruction to students with special needs in a wide variety of service delivery options. In the beginning years of teaching applied and advanced preparation will greatly assist the novice teacher become increasingly more effective in serving the needs of students with disabilities. The use of the IIP can lead to focused, effective instruction that will allow applied experiences for all the teaching credentials that the teacher holds. The clear credential should focus on provided advanced, applied knowledge that enables to candidate to become more proficient in a variety of service delivery modes to provide effective services to student with special needs. The support provided, the plan developed and the instruction offered should be focused on this goal.

6. Commission Certificates of Authorization should be available to allow Education Specialist Credential holders to expand the authorization without obtaining a new credential. These certificates should be available in the areas of Physically and Health Impaired, and Deaf-Blind. Certificates for Resource Specialist and Early Childhood Special Education would be maintained.

Rationale: Credential certificates provide specific advanced preparation. Certificate programs will lead to expanded expertise for teachers, improved services to special needs students, through a streamlined, non-redundant process.

7. Speech-Language Pathology credential programs should be expanded to allow a continuum of opportunities. Because the current structure includes a range of employment possibilities including work in hospitals and clinics as well as schools, the structure of the instructional program could be streamlined to focus on those skills and knowledge necessary to work in schools. This credential would be a seventh Education Specialist Teaching Credential and would focus on the full range of communication and language development skills taught and remediated in schools. Other streamlining activities that would help reduce the shortage include:
  - Build a career ladder for speech aides (SLPAs) and facilitate their entry into upper division coursework to become speech-language pathologists.
  - Provide paid intern opportunities in public schools for persons to complete their clinical and school experiences following achievement of a baccalaureate degree.
  - Encourage more programs to offer classes convenient to already certified teachers who want to be speech-language pathologists.
  - Explore ways to grow programs and to attract more diverse students into both specialist and services credentials.
  - Develop ways to partner with districts to meet local needs.

Rationale: This proposed credential would focus specifically on the preparation needed to teach in schools. It would provide expanded opportunities for candidates who want to serve students with communication needs such as students with ASD, and dyslexia and work closely with other teachers in the continuum of providing communication and literacy skills.

Current Speech Language Pathologist services credentials would be maintained and would offer a full range of services including those that have medical components.

8. Opportunities for special education teachers should be available at all stages of adult learning. There should be career ladder program for paraprofessionals and speech aides. There should be opportunities for parents of students with special needs and second career professionals to enter teaching at a point later in their lives. Teacher preparation programs should be more predisposed to grant equivalent credit for prior experiences where demonstration of skill and performance can be shown.

Rationale: Opportunities should be available to all who can meet the qualifications set by programs. Programs should be predisposed to offer equivalent credit and be prepared to streamline their programs and grant equivalent credit to those who are able to demonstrate required knowledge and performance.

9. Special Education programs are encouraged to expand services to candidates in the following ways:
  - Utilize distance learning mechanisms to deliver instruction. This is particularly important in low incidence programs to assure access to specialized preparation in all regions of the state.
  - Programs, particularly low incidence programs, should share candidates to allow instruction in foundational knowledge, core curriculum and early field experiences be provided in locations convenient to their home or through distance learning. Programs should encourage transfer of credit and multi-campus programs so expertise in content areas can be shared.
  - Programs should pay particular attention to recruiting diverse candidates into Education Specialist programs including actively recruiting candidates with disabilities, those from ethnic and racial groups underrepresented in the teaching workforce, and encourage males to become special education teachers as they represent only about fourteen percent of special education teachers nationwide.

Rationale: The expansion of technology allows preparation programs such as low incidence to reach audiences that previously would have been unavailable. Due to the small number of faculty and candidates in low incidence programs, statewide flexible entry and equivalency of coursework among Institutions of Higher Education would facilitate growth of these programs. If the shortages in special education teachers are to be overcome, traditional recruitment strategies must be enhanced by seeking out potential teachers from new sources and providing better access to programs.

## **Section IV**

### **Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers**

#### **Recommended Changes in Subject Matter Requirements**

In California, subject matter competence is required for all teachers. Since prior to the creation of the Commission, California teaching credentials have required demonstration of subject matter competence by exam, or an approved program that is the equivalent to an academic major rather than a major in education. “Subject matter” in this case, refers to the academic content required for teachers; (not teaching methods, strategies or pedagogy). All approved subject matter exams and programs are tied to the K-12 California Academic Content Standards approved by the State Board of Education. Candidates who have passed the exam or completed an approved subject matter program are demonstrating knowledge of academic content as set forth in the state K-12 California Academic Content Standards.

Until 1997, California special education teachers were required to hold a prerequisite elementary or secondary teaching credential prior to or concurrent with achieving a special education credential and were required to meet subject matter competence for the credential. Primarily due to the massive shortage of special education teachers, the Commission took action to eliminate this requirement. After 1997, special education credential candidates were still required to demonstrate subject matter competence. Their special education teacher preparation program also continued to include foundational knowledge of and experience in general education settings.

In 2003, in response to NCLB, the State Board of Education and the CTC discontinued the approved subject matter program option allowed by Education Code Section 44310 at the elementary level as a method for demonstrating competence, leaving only the (CSET: Multiple Subject) exam option. For single subject candidates and special education candidates, the two options authorized by statute continued to be available.

#### **How Special Education Teachers Demonstrated Subject Matter Competency**

The Title 5 regulations promulgated in 1993 allowed prospective special education teachers to have the option to choose the subject matter competence subject area among the available options approved by the Commission. They could choose competence through program or exam and could choose the multiple subject option or one of the thirteen single subjects available. Table 8 displays the options that special education teachers selected in 2005-2006. Seventy-five percent of those who became Education Specialists in 2005-06 took the CSET: Multiple Subject exam or completed a Commission Approved Subject Matter Program. The second most frequent content area was Health Sciences. Nearly eleven percent of Education Specialists demonstrated subject matter competence through the Health Sciences exam. The next highest is Social Science with 2.2%. The three areas, Mathematics, English/Language Arts and Science, that allow candidates to use the local level review process for subject matter competence, include slightly over four percent of the total of Education Specialists. The remaining six subject areas constitute less than ten percent of the total. Three out of four Education Specialists demonstrated subject matter competence through exam.

**Table 8**  
**Subject Matter Competence Areas for New Education Specialist**  
**Credential Holders 2005-06**

<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Art	13	0.4
Biology	1	0.0
Business	13	0.4
Chemistry	1	0.0
English	51	1.8
Foreign Language	3	0.1
Foundational Math	3	0.1
General Subjects	2,170	74.8
Home Economics	3	0.1
Health Sciences	309	10.7
Industrial & Technical Education	1	0.0
Math	5	0.2
Music	2	0.1
Other Content Areas	233	8.0
Physical Education	21	0.7
Physics	6	0.2
Social Science	65	2.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: CTC, Title II Annual Report, 2005-06

As Table 8 shows, and as noted earlier, the second most frequently used route to demonstrate subject matter competence was the Single Subject Health Sciences exam. Informal studies of California special education teacher preparation programs exhibit very different attitudes toward allowing this single subject exam which was perceived to be an easier exam to pass. Some programs allowed their candidates to meet any subject area for subject matter competence discounting the importance of subject matter for special education teachers. Others required the multiple subject exam or approved program as the only options since special education teachers were likely to teach a full array of subjects. Others felt that subject knowledge of health sciences was appropriate for special education teachers particularly if the teacher candidate was pursuing a specialty that authorized teaching the medically fragile or students with severe/profound needs.

Not all special education and other related services credential holders are required to meet subject matter competence requirements to earn the credential. The subject matter requirements described above do not apply to the following credentials:

- Early Childhood Special Education (Education Specialist Credential authorizes Birth to Pre K)
- Speech Language Pathologists \* (services credential not a teaching credential)
- Orientation and Mobility (services credential)
- Audiology (services credential)

\* The Special Class teaching authorization that may be added to a Speech-Language Pathology Services Credential must meet the IDEA/NCLB teacher requirements including subject matter.



### **Impact of Federal Regulations on California Subject Matter Requirements**

One key goal of the federal reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, is that all students are taught by highly qualified teachers (HQT). NCLB requires all teachers of core academic subjects, including special education teachers, to meet the NCLB teacher requirements. A teacher of core academic subjects must have: (1) a bachelor's degree; (2) have an Intern Credential for no more than three years or a state credential, and (3) demonstrated core academic subject matter competence in each core academic subject taught. To implement the teacher requirements of the NCLB Act, changes were necessary in order to align current California credentialing and professional development practices with NCLB goals. The State Board of Education (SBE), the California Department of Education (CDE), and the Commission worked closely with local education agencies to provide support for full compliance with NCLB teacher requirements. NCLB requirements as they pertain to special education are explained in greater detail in Appendix D.

Federal NCLB law defines core academic subjects the same for all teachers at all levels as: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. Special education teachers, teaching secondary curriculum must demonstrate subject matter competence in the subjects they are assigned to teach to be deemed NCLB compliant and a “Highly Qualified” teacher. Elementary school teachers must demonstrate competence in reading, writing, mathematics, and other core academic subject areas of the elementary school curriculum.

NCLB options for demonstrating subject matter competence vary, depending on whether a teacher is “new” or “not new” to the profession as defined in California regulations and whether the individual teaches elementary or secondary curriculum. Federal statute (and the actions of SBE) provides “Not New” elementary teachers with two options to demonstrate subject matter competence. They may pass a CTC approved subject matter examination or they may complete the California High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) which is a local level review for subject matter competence. Federal law provides “Not New” middle/high school teachers with several options to demonstrate subject area competence. They may pass a CTC approved single subject matter examination, or they may complete one of the following in each core subject area taught:

- a) CTC approved subject matter program
- b) major
- c) major equivalent (32 semester units or the equivalent)
- d) graduate degree
- e) National Board Certification, or
- f) California HOUSSE process

HOUSSE is a uniform statewide system used by local employing agencies to document how teachers who are already employed have demonstrated subject matter competence for the core academic subjects reflected in their specific teaching assignments. HOUSSE is typically only available to “not new” teachers. However, IDEA 2004 allows the HOUSSE option for “new” to the profession for secondary level special education teachers only if they are *already* subject matter compliant in math, science, or English/Language Arts and provides additional time for

these teachers to demonstrate compliance in the other NCLB core academic subject areas taught. The reauthorization requirements currently being considered by Congress are discussing whether to include a HOUSSE option for most special education teachers.

### **Changes in California Regulations Needed to Meet the Federal Definition of “Highly Qualified” Special Education Teacher**

Aligning state and federal requirements provides a series of challenges to the Department of Education, the Commission and to the local education agencies who seek to meet these requirements. The primary challenges related to subject matter reside at the secondary level. These challenges must be addressed to assure a robust supply of secondary special education teachers; to provide employers with clear information about the subject matter requirements for potential hires; and to clarify for applicants to special education preparation programs, as well as new teachers, the exact scope of assignments for which they are considered NCLB compliant.

#### Challenges with HQT for Education Specialists: Limiting the Options

In 2002, the State of Board of Education, in response to requirements of NCLB, limited demonstration of elementary subject matter competence to the exam route. This affected teacher candidates both in multiple subject programs and special education.

According to persons responsible for recruitment in approved liberal studies programs, this change negatively influenced the recruitment efforts for new teaching candidates by narrowing the pipeline. In addition, there were a number of robust blended teacher preparation programs in place prior to the change of policy. These programs allowed candidates to complete CTC-approved elementary subject matter programs concurrently with pursuing teacher preparation coursework in special education. Subsequent to the restriction on using subject matter programs to demonstrate elementary subject matter competence, there has been testimony in the stakeholder forums that the agreements among faculty supporting these blended programs have begun to disintegrate, leading to the decline in number of these programs.

#### Different Levels/Different Requirements

NCLB/IDEA requirements for special education teachers assigned to teach in secondary schools are different than those in an elementary school. For junior high and middle schools, the designation of the school or class is based on whether the curriculum taught is elementary or secondary level.

Most special education candidates do not know where they will be employed until after they have completed their teacher preparation and field experiences. Under the IDEA/NCLB requirements, a secondary candidate needs a subject matter major in an NCLB core academic subject, and that decision needs to be made early in a collegiate career. For example, if a candidate chooses a math major, calculus and other advanced collegiate math courses must begin in the lower division. If a candidate waits until they are an upper division student to decide whether to meet elementary or secondary subject matter requirements, this hesitation virtually eliminates secondary special education teaching as an option. This very likely scenario makes the probability of extreme shortages at the secondary level almost a certainty. As was shown in Table 7, relatively few special education candidates have chosen specific single subjects for subject matter competence in prior years.

The importance of community college advisement can not be underestimated since well over half of those who become special education teachers begin their collegiate careers in community colleges. Only careful and early advisement at community colleges and at the lower division level will lessen the probability of this scenario. The undergraduate options offered in the credential structure section of this report offer the potential of reaching potential candidates earlier and providing integrated preparation and advisement.

The challenge of different levels/different requirements was compounded in January 1, 2007, when the CTC (in response to SB 1209) streamlined the process through which out-of-state special education teachers demonstrate subject matter competency when applying directly to CTC for a comparable California teaching credential. Through this process, any teacher who has demonstrated subject matter competence in another state is deemed to have met subject matter competence in California. There are a number of states that continue to allow teacher candidates to demonstrate subject matter at the elementary curriculum level through a "coursework" route. Thus, this creates a situation where teachers prepared out of state actually have more options available to them to demonstrate subject matter competence at the elementary curriculum level than native California teacher candidates.

The issue of different levels/different requirements extends to "not new" teachers also. Secondary special education teachers have the lowest percentage of HQT than at any other level, as reported to the CDE, for 2006-2007 school year. Sixty-six percent of secondary level special education teachers are HQT while the overall state average is 92 percent. More than two-thirds of secondary teachers have achieved HQT status through a local process (HOUSSE) described below. Current special education credential requirements for "not new teachers" allow candidates to verify subject matter in any subject area when they intend to teach at the secondary level. IDEA/NCLB limits subject matter competence at the secondary level to a specific list of core academic subject areas: art, English/language arts, civic/government, dance, drama/theater, economics, foreign language, geography, history, mathematics, reading, science, and elementary.

Therefore, many current special education teacher candidates have a discrepancy between the secondary subject matter coursework or examination that they complete to earn the special education credential and the subject matter requirements for their job assignment as required by the teacher requirements of IDEA/NCLB. Often credential holders must complete additional secondary subject matter requirements for specific job assignments at the secondary level.

These additional subject matter requirements typically are a surprise to current credentialed teachers who have already demonstrated subject matter in one area and hold a special education credential. For example, a special education teacher may have demonstrated subject matter competence by passing CSET: Multiple Subject and hold a special education teaching credential. If this teacher is employed to teach secondary curriculum as a teacher-of-record in a core academic subject (listed above), this fully-credentialed teacher must complete additional subject matter preparation in order to be reported as meeting NCLB compliance.

Another typical example is a special education teacher who demonstrated subject matter competence by passing the Single Subject examination in a non-core academic subject, such as Health Sciences. This teacher also holds a special education credential. However, upon hire at

the secondary level this teacher also would need to pursue additional subject matter preparation in a core academic subject in order to be deemed as IDEA/ NCLB compliant.

For secondary teachers who have completed their credentials and find that they must meet additional subject matter requirements because of their job assignment, there are a number of district-based options available for teachers and employers to demonstrate IDEA/ NCLB subject matter competence in additional content areas. These options include: coursework (degree major or major equivalent); advanced certification (National Board) or the (HOUSSE) process.

### Incompatibility

Given that special education credentials authorize service in grades K-12 or birth through 22, but subject matter competence must be demonstrated for IDEA/NCLB at the elementary or middle/high curriculum level, local employing agencies are faced with many complexities in the appropriate assignment and NCLB compliance of special education teachers. Teacher candidates, teacher preparation programs and employers are required to sort through a complex landscape of state and federal laws as well as program and employer practices to ensure that teachers indeed meet IDEA/NCLB compliance and also hold the appropriate special education authorization to serve the students.

### **Recommendations Related to Subject Matter Competence**

The Workgroup agrees that all teachers, including special education teachers, who are assigned to teach core academic subjects should be expected to demonstrate subject matter competence in those subjects they are assigned to teach. The Workgroup is concerned that NCLB/IDEA requirements and regulations may make the current shortage of special education teachers even more acute. To limit the impact on the supply of special education teachers while assuring that all children with special needs are taught by teachers with the appropriate subject matter knowledge, the Workgroup makes the following recommendations.

1. (10) In schools designated as elementary schools, as well as junior high and middle schools which designate their classrooms as teaching elementary curriculum, the appropriate subject matter competence determiner shall be the CSET: Multiple Subject exam.

Rationale: In 2003 the State Board of Education and the Commission agreed that all elementary teacher candidates are required to meet subject matter competence by passing the state required exam.

2. (11) Special education teachers who are assigned as teachers of record in a secondary classroom, including those junior high and middle schools that identify themselves as middle/high schools, must possess subject matter competence in a NCLB core academic subject area. More specifically, middle/high subject matter competence verification through coursework or examination would be limited to English, mathematics, and science.

Rationale: For secondary special education teachers, including those junior high and middle schools that identify themselves as secondary schools, IDEA/NCLB only recognizes these three subject areas to use the HOUSSE option for “new” middle/high special education teachers. By focusing on these three subject areas, the ‘new’ middle/high special education teacher will have greater flexibility to meet IDEA/NCLB subject matter

competency in other core academic subjects taught within two years of date-of-hire by using the HOUSSE option. Special education teachers who have demonstrated subject matter at the elementary level could be assigned as a co-teacher at the secondary level; new secondary special education teachers could utilize a HOUSSE process to move to the elementary level. This flexibility helps employers with assignment issues, but also allows special education professionals to move across different settings during their careers helping possible retention with regard to burn out.

3. (12) List on the Education Specialist Credential document the following:
  - a. Method of meeting subject matter competence.
  - b. Authorized services specific to the special education area and subject matter competence; for example, passage of CSET: Multiple Subject, would authorize all settings (home/hospital, self-contained class, etc.) in K-8 and high school consultation and collaboration.

Rationale: This would allow employers (and credential holders) to know which Education Specialist Credential holders are qualified to teach specific core content areas and should facilitate more appropriate assignments of special education teachers. This will also provide information to the credential holder about the subject matter authorization of the credential. Listing clear statements on the credential document about the subject matter routes completed by candidates assist preparation programs and employing districts to understand and communicate more effectively about appropriate job placements for graduates and assists preparation programs to communicate more clearly with potential students about the relationship of their subject matter preparation and their realistic job opportunities upon graduation. For example, a teacher candidate may demonstrate subject matter at the elementary level to earn a special education credential but finds employment at the secondary level. The individual is authorized to serve in the special education assignment, but does not meet the IDEA/NCLB subject matter competence requirement.

4. (13) Holders of special education credentials prepared in California may earn an introductory subject matter authorization in the same manner as general education teachers. This subject matter authorization must be a minimum of 32 semester units or a degree major issued only in NCLB core academic subject areas thus making the teacher subject matter competent.

Rationale: Special Education teachers prepared in California should meet the same requirements as teachers prepared in other states and issued credentials in California. SB 1209 allows teachers prepared in other states and seeking credentials in California to meet subject matter with a 32 unit degree major.

5. (14) Holders of General, Standard and Ryan Teaching Credentials do not need to meet an additional subject matter competence requirement for the special education credential; holding one of these teaching credentials meets that requirement regardless of the subject area of that credential. In addition, the Early Childhood Special Education Credential continues to be exempt from subject matter requirements.

Rationale: Per Title 5 requirements, holders of these credentials have met subject matter competence requirements.

6. (15) In addition to the Commission-approved subject matter program, passage of the appropriate examination, or completion of a degree major or major equivalent (a minimum of 32 semester units) meets the subject matter competence requirement for the special education credential.

Rationale: This would provide parity for all who seek an Education Specialist Credential. Increasing the options for meeting subject matter will allow more options for early deciders and late deciders, including career changers. For example, an engineer who decides to change careers could demonstrate subject matter at the secondary level in mathematics with 32 units of coursework completed while earning his/her engineering degrees.

7. (16) Those secondary classrooms that districts are unable to find special education teachers appropriately qualified in subject matter areas should use service delivery models such as co-teaching, collaboration and other consultative models that team general education and special education teachers and provide a subject matter competent teacher of record. In addition, teachers who work with medically fragile and/or severe/profound students should have more flexibility in meeting subject matter competence.

Rationale: Among service delivery options are collaborative teaching models. These are options which would allow for classrooms to be in compliance with NCLB/IDEA without the Educational Specialist Credential holder possessing the required subject matter competence. These options improve the quality of service delivery for all children. For example, the recommendations enable co-teaching of secondary, general, and special education teachers, combining their expertise in subject matter and teaching strategies for all students' success. Teachers of medically fragile and severe/profound students are likely to be using alternative life skills curriculum instead of the core curriculum and therefore need more broadly based subject matter knowledge regardless of the age of the students being taught.

8. (17) Due to the number of complex challenges in implementation of the state and federal Subject Matter Competence/Verification requirements at all levels, the Commission should continue to collaborate with the State Board of Education and the Department of Education as flexible pathways are identified for demonstration of subject matter competence. Flexible pathways might include:
  - giving elementary teachers an extended “grace” period to achieve subject matter competence in a core academic secondary area;
  - allow an extended “grace” period to achieve subject matter competence in a core academic secondary subject area for those teaching in a setting deemed K-8 for junior and middle school candidates;
  - add the HOUSSE option for new special education teachers assigned at the elementary level and who have demonstrated only secondary subject matter competence;
  - provide advising to candidates early enough so that informed decisions are made by candidates regarding what level of students they want to teach;

- provide the same options to California students that are currently available to out-of-state applicants, subject matter majors with 32 units for secondary or approved program. For example, the same streamlining processes that SB 1209 gives to out-of-state candidates should be applied to California prepared candidates; and encourage the State Board of Education and Department of Education to add the HOUSSE option for new special education teachers assigned at the elementary level who have demonstrated only secondary subject matter competence.

Rationale: HOUSSE options for new credential holders would provide more flexibility for candidates and employers in assigning special education credential holders across elementary and secondary settings.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION CREDENTIAL WORKGROUP ROSTER**



## **SPECIAL EDUCATION CREDENTIAL WORKGROUP MEMBERS**

### **Member**

Andrews, Lanna  
 Andrews, Sue  
 Barrett, Janet  
 Best, Sherwood (Sherry)  
 Brown, Geri  
 Cepello, Michelle  
 Davidson, Satoko  
 Denman, Ken  
 Duckett, Jane  
 Grandinette, Sharon  
 Grayson-DeJong, Pat  
 Jarrett, Sharon  
 Karge, Belinda  
 Kennedy, Virginia  
 Kirchner, Carl  
 Krapf, David  
 Maydeck, Daniel  
 Parker, Margaret (Dee)  
 Raske, David  
 Sacks, Sharon  
 Schrup, Marie  
 Smetana, Linda  
 Staples, Sandra  
 Vessey, Ann

### **Affiliation**

University of San Francisco  
 Ventura County Office of Education  
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 CSU Los Angeles  
 San Diego Unified School District  
 CSU Chico  
 Retired, Vallejo Unified School Dist.  
 ABC Unified School District  
 National University  
 Private Practice  
 Los Angeles Unified School District  
 Los Angeles Unified School District  
 CSU Fullerton  
 CSU Northridge  
 California Department of Education, Retired  
 St. Mary's College  
 LeRoy Haynes Center  
 CSU Dominguez Hills  
 Sacramento State University  
 California School for the Blind  
 Sweetwater Union H.S. District  
 CSU East Bay  
 Lodi Unified School Dist.  
 Riverside County Office of Education

### **Organizational Representatives:**

Burness, Maureen	Association of California School Administrators (Rancho Cordova Unified)
Johnson, Merilee	California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (Glenn County Office of Education)
Jones, Diane	California Teachers Association (San Diego Unified)
Kinley, Kathy	California School Boards Association (Chaffey Jt. Union H.S.Dist.)
Lewis, Michael	CSU, Chancellor's Office
Mink, Christine	California Federation of Teachers (Morgan Hill Unified)

### **Liaisons:**

Hawkins, Angela (Angie)	Advisory Commission on Special Education
Waite, Athena	Commission on Teacher Credentialing (UC, Riverside)
Canning, Janet	California Department of Education, Special Education Division

### **Advisors:**

Meinders, Dona	California Comprehensive Center
Gillespie, Phoebe	National Center for Special Education Personnel and Related Service Providers

### **Commission Staff**

McKibbin, Michael	Professional Services Division
Jones Wadsworth, Jan	Professional Services Division
Fesperman, Terri	Certification, Assignment, and Waivers Division